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The Widow Burden Meets William Eagle Feather Outside of Gold Creek

by Robert Cooperman

I searched for William's campfire,
seeking a scrap of solace
from the man I can't help loving,
but whose life in the woods
is so strange and wild.

Each tree loomed identical,
each crackling twig a cougar.
Desperate and despairing,
I cast about for the dim path
back to town: vanished
in that dark, magic-wood.

In dusk mist, a great owl
swooped like Thomas' ghost.
"You adulterous hypocrite!"
I shrieked. A rough hand
stifled my mouth, lungs filling
with terror's silent music.

William! I kissed him fierce,
tore at his clothes,
like women who risk all,
in novels.

"Come away with me now,"
he caressed me after
we had dressed again.
I took one step with him,
one back to town—the path
suddenly as clearly marked
as the boulevards
of my Boston girlhood.

